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SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: MEDIA REACTION FOR THE ASTANA VISIT OF
UNDERSECRETARY BILL BURNS

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1. SUMMARY: The Kazakhstani media broadly reported Under Secretary of State Bill Burns's July 10 meeting in Astana with President Nazarbayev; however, the majority of the coverage was factual rather than analytical, due to the fact that the event happened on a Friday, after all of the weekly analytical newspapers had been published. Burns made a statement and answered journalists' question at a brief press conference immediately following the Nazarbayev meeting. The press coverage emphasized Burns's praise for Nazarbayev's leadership on non-proliferation issues and his statement that the United States attaches high priority to its relationship with Kazakhstan. One outlet pointed out that the U.S.-Kazakhstani relationship does not need to be "reset." END SUMMARY.

ON THE AIR

2. Four of Kazakhstan's largest television stations, including the two official, nationwide channels, "Khabar" and "Kazakhstan," as well as pro-government "Era TV" and "Rakhat," highlighted the visit on their evening news broadcasts. "Kazakhstan" broadcast Under Secretary Burns's statement praising President Nazarbayev for showing leadership on the issue on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. "Khabar" showed a more complete version of Under Secretary Burns' statement, including not only the praise for President Nazarbayev's non-proliferation leadership, but also the sections in which Burns reiterated U.S. support for Kazakhstan's 2010 OSCE chairmanship and pointed out that Kazakhstan was the delegation's first stop on its Central Asian tour. "Khabar" also mentioned Nazarbayev's support of President Obama's initiative for a global nuclear security summit next spring in New York. Both official channels broadcast the reports in both the Russian and Kazakh languages.
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3. The four largest national dailies, official "Kazakhstanskaya Pravda," pro-government "Liter," pro-government "Express K," and independent "Vremya" all covered the visit by quoting Under

Secretary Burns as saying that, "U.S. President Barack Obama attaches high priority to the U.S. relationship with Kazakhstan." The "Kazakhstan Today" news service reported more fully on the U.S. delegation's meeting with Nazarbayev, saying that "Burns conveyed to the Kazakhstani president best wishes from U.S. President Barack Obama." "Kazakhstan Today" also noted that Burns briefed Nazarbayev on the recently concluded Moscow summit meeting between President Obama and Russian President Medvedev, and quoted the Under Secretary saying, "The U.S. president's visit to Moscow was very successful. Washington attaches importance to good relations with Russia. The United States also highly values relations and cooperation with Kazakhstan."

NO NEED TO RESET

14. "Express K" briefly profiled Under Secretary Burns, saying he "is known as one of the most successful U.S. career diplomats. The author asserted that "Time" magazine "included him in its list of 50 prospective American leaders under 40, and in its list of the 100 most promising young leaders in the world." The author also connected the delegation's visit to a "Washington Times" article in which Chevron CEO Dave O'Reilly and Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) co-founder and former Georgia Senator Sam Nunn said that while the Obama Administration is trying to "reset" its relationship with Russia, it already has successful relationships with other former Soviet countries -- "and Kazakhstan first of all" -- which don't need to be "reset."

15. The following is the transcript of Under Secretary Burns's July tenth press conference in Astana:

Under Secretary Burns: Good Afternoon. I am delighted to be here in Kazakhstan with a delegation of senior colleagues from the U.S. Government. I am especially happy to make Kazakhstan our first stop after a successful summit in Moscow and after the G-8 summit.

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President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton asked us to emphasize the importance and the high priority that the new American administration attaches to our relationship with Kazakhstan.

We've had a very productive set of conversations today. I especially wanted to emphasize my appreciation for the warmth and hospitality offered by President Nazarbayev. I expressed to the president our appreciation for our cooperation in Afghanistan, which is a common challenge. I expressed our appreciation for the president's leadership on the issue of non-proliferation. President Obama looks forward very much to joining President Nazarbayev in an important nuclear security summit in the United States next spring.

We talked about ways in which we can deepen our economic relationship, not only in the energy sector but also in other sectors of the economy. I also had an opportunity to discuss the results of what was a very successful summit between President Obama and President Medvedev in Moscow earlier this week. I stressed our conviction that a strong relationship between the United States and Russia is an important complement to our partnerships with Kazakhstan and our other friends in the region. And finally, we talked about our support for Kazakhstan's chairmanship of the OSCE in 2010. It is an important opportunity for Kazakhstan to show its leadership and also an important opportunity to demonstrate progress in the various areas of democratic reform to which Kazakhstan has committed itself.

I was also pleased during my visit to have a chance to meet with civil society leaders. That [meeting] very much reflected President Obama's view that a strong relationship between the United States and Kazakhstan depends on good relationship between our governments, as well as on good relations between our two societies.

So once again, I believe we had a very productive and constructive set of discussions, and I leave Kazakhstan with a very strong sense of the potential for further strengthening our relationship.

I would be glad to respond to your questions.

Khabar News Agency: In light of the new administration now in the White House, can we expect changes in the U.S.-Kazakhstan relationship as a result?

Under Secretary Burns: As I said, President Obama attaches high priority to the relationship between our two countries. That's what the visit of our delegation reflects. I strongly believe that we will be able to strengthen our relationship even further in the coming years. And that's very much in the interest of both of our countries and both of our peoples.

Khabar News Agency: Recently, President Nazarbayev received here - in this same building - the President of Israel, and during that meeting a lot was said about international nuclear security. The presidents called on all nuclear nations to decrease the level of nuclear tensions. What is your take on that?

Undersecretary Burns: I think President Nazarbayev has demonstrated real leadership on the issue of non-proliferation. The United States, for our part, has tried to demonstrate our own commitment to doing everything we can to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and also to set a good example ourselves. A good example of that is the joint understanding that President Obama and President Medvedev reached in Moscow a few days ago about a further agreement to limit strategic arms. So we're determined to do our part, and we value greatly President Nazarbayev's leadership on this issue.

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